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# Pauline Evangelism

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PAULINE EVANGELISM

by

Samuel Emerick

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
College of Religion

Division of Graduate Instruction  
Butler University  
Indianapolis  
1940

## INTRODUCTION

The objective of the writer of this thesis is to present a plain account of the work of Paul as an evangelist in the field of early Christianity. In his labors to spread the gospel, and in his endeavors to lead people to accept and obey that gospel, Paul was a devoted man. His devotion to this great cause, however, had not always been characteristic of Paul. He once lived in direct hostility to the cause for which he later endangered and finally surrendered his life. This change of mind and conduct will be better understood when we consider his early life, his conversion, and his commission.

The task of building the Kingdom of God on earth, a task to which Paul gave the greater part of his life, had its birth in the midst of a hostile world. The basic facts of this Kingdom were counteractive to the Roman Empire and its Emperor; it found few adherents from those who had been bound by duty and devotion to the old Jewish system; in fact, the general beliefs and practices of its time rendered fierce opposition

to ever permitting Christianity to gain power in the world.

Christianity survived, and it came to be recognized by many believers who became obedient to its faith - even the obedience unto death. There were twelve who were chosen to be propagators of the vital message which Christianity embodied, and were commissioned to take it to all the world.

Out of this embryonic period of Christianity emerges this dynamic personality, preaching and teaching the Kingdom of God, and making many converts to his faith. Paul's life had witnessed a great change, and his preaching revealed an unusual endowment of power; he is now obsessed with a new objective, and guided by a sublime motive. Henceforth, we desire to trace through Paul's life, the methods he used, and the message he preached in the great cause of evangelism; and, at least in part, to endeavor to evaluate the completeness and effectiveness of his evangelistic program.

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# PAULINE EVANGELISM

## SECTION ONE

### THE MAN, PAUL

#### CHAPTER I

#### HIS EARLY LIFE

When we search through the facts of Paul's life we discover him to be a great light which incessantly shines in the Judaistic and Paganistic world in which he was born. First he shines in behalf of Judaism and later he shines against it.

As Ramsay said, "Paul insistently presses on the minds of men, and we cannot get clear of him."<sup>1</sup>

The first rays of this lighted life began to shine in the city called Tarsus. This was Paul's birthplace according to his own testimony to the infuriated multitude from the steps of the tower of Antonia, and to the captain of the castle he spoke on the same occasion, saying,

"I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia."<sup>2</sup>

"I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ramsay. "Teaching of Paul in Modern Times"
  2. Acts 22:3.
  3. Acts 21:39.

Tarsus, with all its circumstances which surrounded the cradle and infancy of the infant Saul, had a great significance in his later life. The native town of this one who was to be the "Apostle of the Gentiles" gave ample opportunities for the study of customs, practises, and beliefs of the people among whom he was to labor. It was the Capital of the province of Cilicia, and because of its importance and its location it was composed of a very cosmopolitan populace. It was favorably situated on the banks of the then navigable river, Cydnus, in the plains at the foot of the Taurus Mountains. From this Capital city the Cydnus river gave direct access to the Mediterranean sea. On one side Tarsus had communication with Syria; and on the other side, through the pass known as the "Cilician Gates", with the lands beyond the great Taurus Mountains, which included Galatia and Cappidocia, and the far-reaching territories of Asia Minor.

Such a situation would surround Tarsus with beauty. The river, plains, and mountains would all have a part. Perhaps the majestic scenes which compassed the psalmist David would not excel these which surrounded the great Apostle; yet he gives very little expression to these

external beauties. We are led to believe, however, from Farrar's study of Tarsus, that the city today is very different. It has become a very dirty, squalid, and ruinous Mohammedan city which still bears the same title and stands in the same location.<sup>1</sup>

Tarsus, as a commercial, intellectual, and religious center, ranked high in its day, and certainly made a great contribution to the life of the Apostle. It appears that he uses illustrations and metaphors from the mercantile life of this busy city. He would probably be acquainted with any lumber business which might transport timber from the forests of Taurus to the Mediterranean; he was evidently trained in the business of weaving, and here he learned his trade, as was the custom enjoined on the parents of all Jewish boys, which benefited him in later years. In fact, it is stated that the coins of the city represented Tarsus as being seated amid bales of various merchandise.<sup>2</sup> Such a commercial center would attract trade and traffic from all its neighboring world.

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1. Canon Farrar, "The Life of St. Paul" p. 30.

2. *ibid.*, p. 32.



The city of Tarsus was not without its many religions, as well as its Greek culture which flourished at this time. The pagan ideas and various religious rites would not miss such a strategic centre as Tarsus. The fact that Paul was acquainted with its Greek culture and learning may be revealed in his actions and address which he delivered in Athens; it may also be seen in his citation of an Athenian poet whom he quoted;<sup>1</sup> and again, his passage about the Cretians.<sup>2</sup>

We are uncertain as to the definite reason of Saul's parents leaving Palestine; but whether they were part of the Jewish Diaspora or whether their parents were attracted to this "No mean city",<sup>3</sup> we find them situated here at Saul's birth. Their Jewish home was no doubt gladdened by the coming of this son and heir. He was given the name of Saul, "the desired," "child of prayer," perhaps because of ancestral pride; for they claimed kinship with the first King of Israel, who was of the same name.

Paul's epistles frequently state his testimony to his being a member of the stock of Israel.

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1. Acts 17:28.
  2. Titus 1:12.
  3. Acts 21:39.

"Whereinsoever any is bold, I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I."<sup>1</sup>

"Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee."<sup>2</sup>

Although his father was a Hellenist and a Roman citizen<sup>3</sup>; he was a strict Jew. Thus he would be faithful to the customs and religious rites of the Jewish faith. The Hebrew language would be spoken, the Old Testament would be their Bible, and thus Saul would become acquainted with the knowledge of Judaism at an early age.

Paganism with its corrupt morals, its passionate life, its unconcerned and inconsistent living was in direct contrast with the quiet, pious life of Judaism. Therefore, seeing this difference, Saul had youthful dreams of some day being able to help correct this stream of corrupt pagan living, and bring into the place of their many gods and goddesses the one and the only true God, Israel's Jehovah. We shall see in our next chapter that Paul's dreams partly became reality as

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1. II Cor. 11:21,22.
2. Phil. 3:5.
3. Acts 22:28.

he goes to Jerusalem to faithfully equip himself with the knowledge and interpretation of Judaism and its law.

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## CHAPTER II

### HIS EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

Paul's father enjoyed the rights and privileges of Roman citizenship, yet this did not change his descent from pure Judaism. His birth in a city with a Greek populace, and its connection with a province that was incorporated into the Roman Empire, does not change the fact that Paul was cradled in a Hebrew home, and his earliest learning was acquired after the fashion of the most strict Hebraist. His was a family of Hellenist Jews in a Hellenist city; yet it was a Jewish home in a Greek community. This provided a channel for Paul to become acquainted with both the Jewish and Greek languages and customs. It was perhaps here where Paul learned to be "all things to all men, that he (I) might by all means save some."<sup>1</sup> At least he learns to be a Jew to the Jews and a Greek to the Greeks; and from here on, Paul speaks of the "Jew first, and also the Greek."<sup>2</sup>

Being a "Hebrew of the Hebrews,"<sup>3</sup> Paul's training would begin in the home. His own reference to Timothy

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1. I Cor. 9:22.
2. Rom. 1:17
3. Phil. 3:5

gives some light on the training of Jewish children-

"That from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise."<sup>1</sup>

Josephus also bears witness to the Jewish training of children-

"Let the children also learn the laws, as the first thing they are taught, which will be the best thing they can be taught, and will be the cause of their future felicity."<sup>2</sup>

Although Tarsus ranked high in its learning, and though it may have had the fame of a University being in its midst, it is not likely that a Jewish lad would have been educated in Greek influence. He perhaps was a frequent attender at the synagogue, and there he sat at the feet of teachers of the Jewish law and customs.

"At the age of five he would begin to study the Bible with his parents at home; and even earlier than this he would doubtless have learnt the Shema and the Hallel (Psalms CXIII-CXVIII) in whole or in part. At six he would go to his 'vineyard', as the later Rabbis called their schools. At ten he would begin to study those earlier and simpler developments of the Oral Law, which were afterward collected in the Mishna. At thirteen he would, by a sort of 'confirmation', become a 'Son of the Commandment.' At fifteen he would be trained in yet more minute and burdensome Rules and Precedents... During many years he would be ranked among the 'pupils of the wise,' and be 'mainly occupied with the traditions of the Fathers!'"<sup>3</sup>

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1. II Tim. 3:15

2. Josephus. Ant. of the Jews. Bk. IV, Chapt. III, p.131.

3. Farrar, "Life of St. Paul", p. 43.

Certainly the father of this Jewish home would not neglect that commandment in the book of the Precepts which read--

"These words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, we would conclude that the sacred scriptures would be the textbook of the early Jewish training.

We would also make mention that, in regard to Paul's education in his native community, it was probably here that he came into contact with the Stoic and other cults of philosophy, and was aware for the first time of the problem of evil and the problem of freedom.

At the completion of his proper home training, Paul was taken to Jerusalem and started in the preparation of being trained for the office of Jewish Rabbi. We are not certain of his age when he made this change, but we get an idea from the scriptures. Luke calls him a young man when he stands at the stoning of Stephen.<sup>2</sup> But if a man was reckoned a young man until he was thirty years of age, Paul must have gone to Jerusalem between the age of thirteen and thirty.

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1. Dt. 6:6.  
2. Acts 7:58

"The age of thirteen...was the age at which a Jewish boy, if he were destined for the position of a Rabbi, entered the school of some great master."<sup>1</sup>

Paul evidently had a sister living at Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>

It may have been, although we have no record, that Paul made his residence with her while he was a student in the Rabbinical school there.

To the Jew the laws of Moses and the scribes were his righteousness, his religion, and his means of pleasing God. Therefore he must know them well, and he spent several years in an endeavor to thoroughly acquaint himself with them. Paul being both a Jew and a Pharasee would be double reason for him to be a student of the law. As for his being a Jew "they give him testimony for being a wise man who is fully acquainted with our laws, and is able to interpret their meaning."<sup>3</sup> And his being a Pharasee also necessitated a knowledge of the law if he would be true to custom. "For there was a certain sect of men that were Jews, who valued themselves highly upon the exact skill they had in the law of their fathers, and made men believe they were highly favored by God...these are those that

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1. Canon Farrar, "Life of St. Paul", Chapt. II, p.43.

2. Acts 23:16.

3. Josephus--Ant. of the Jews. Book XX, Chapt. XI, p. 602.

are called the sect of the Pharisees."<sup>1</sup> "These are a certain sect of the Jews that appear more religious than others, and seem to interpret the laws more accurately."<sup>2</sup>

There were many institutions of learning in Jerusalem that would be able to prepare Paul with this training. Besides the 480 synagogues, there were outstanding Rabbinical schools. The desire of the young man's heart no doubt was to be able to reach the goal of his education, the semicha, or the degree granted by the highest school in Jerusalem. Paul became a student in the school of Hillel, a rival school to the one whose founder was Shammai. These schools differed in at least one respect; Hillel was more tolerant and liberal, while Shammai was more firm and strict in orthodoxy.

Paul sat at the feet of one, Gamaliel, who was the grandson of Hillel, and now was the leader of this more liberal school. He was "a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people."<sup>3</sup> His tolerant and sympathetic spirit is manifested on the occasion when the Sanhedrin was called upon to judge the Apostles for

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1. Josephus--Ant. of the Jews, Book XVII, Chapt. III, p. 505.
  2. ibid--Wars of the Jews, Book I, Chapt. V, p. 614.
  3. Acts 5:34



preaching in the name of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Gamaliel suggests that they refrain from these men, and let them alone.

At this seat of learning Paul was a faithful student, being "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was jealous toward God."<sup>2</sup> What a privilege it was for Paul to be the follower of such a wise man; a man who was not only tolerant and liberal, but who was also a teacher of the law and of the Jewish traditions in a devoted manner. It is evident that Paul became, perhaps, the most favorite pupil of Gamaliel, for in later years Paul boasts of his superiority over fellow-Jews in his knowledge of the traditions of their fathers--I "profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers."<sup>3</sup> The Old Testament scriptures was a constant source of knowledge to every Rabbinical student. Paul's acquaintance with these scriptures reveals that he no doubt had studied them since early childhood. "From the Pentateuch, from the Prophets, and above all from the Psalter, he not only quotes repeatedly, advancing at each step

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1. Acts 5:28
  2. Acts 22:3
  3. Gal. 1:14

of the argument from quotation to quotation, as though without these his argument, which is often quite independent of them, would lack authority; but he also quotes, as is evident, from memory,...he knew it so well that his sentences are constantly moulded by its rhythm, and his thoughts incessantly colored by its expressions."<sup>1</sup>

The study of the sacred scriptures was known as "Midrash"--interpretation or investigation of the text. It included two branches: law and history. And with these Paul prepared himself thoroughly.

We are aware of all the benefit which Paul certainly derived from his studying at the feet of this faithful teacher of the law in the most prominent school of Jewish learning at that time. But according to Paul's testimony in the seventh chapter of Romans, he had a thirsting in his nature for something in his life which a strict observance of the law and Jewish ritual did not quench. In fact he was growing into a deeper bondage to the law, and he could speak with Peter when he called it a "yoke..., which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."<sup>2</sup> This yoke of

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1. Farrar--Life of Paul. Chapt. III, p. 45.

2. Acts 15:10.

bondage wore on in Paul's life, but he was advancing rapidly toward a crisis which would bring about a complete transformation and a freedom which he long had desired.

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### CHAPTER III

#### HIS CONVERSION AND COMMISSION

During the ministry of Jesus, Tiberius Caesar was Emperor of the Roman Empire, and Pontius Pilate was governor of the Judean province. In the seventh year of Pilate's reign, the ministry of Christ was closed by the crucifixion. Saul was possibly thirty-one and had been in Jerusalem a number of years. However, since Christ was put to death by the Sadduceean faction, and Paul was a strict Pharisee, we would assume that he had no part in crucifying Jesus. We do not even know that Paul had ever seen Jesus, although it would seem possible that they would both have been in this Jewish capitol at the same time. Of course Paul's language in the twenty-second chapter of Acts and the ninth chapter of First Corinthians assures us that he had seen Jesus after his resurrection; this implies the vision of Christ which came to him on the road to Damascus.

About three years after the crucifixion of Jesus, Pilate was taken from his rather brutal administration and sent to Rome to give an account for his actions

against a large number of Samaritans, in which many were killed, taken prisoners, or dispersed. Shortly after this, Tiberius died, and the Jews were relieved from this hard master. All of this gave way for the Jews to pour forth their long-smothered national vengeance.

At this time the Jews were divided into two leading groups--the Sadducees and Pharisees. The former was noted for their official position with the state; they were fewer in number but they were distinguished and wealthy. The latter were seemingly more influential with the masses of people, and were in repute for their observance of the Jewish law and ritual.

Although the Sadducees were in power at the time of Jesus' death, their effectiveness was later weakened. This is seen in the fourth chapter of Acts when the party of the Sadducees assailed Peter and John for preaching the resurrection, and would have put them to death; but Gamaliel, a member of the party of the Pharisees, persuaded the Sanhedrin to be moderate in dealing with the apostles. They released them with only a beating. This was in part a defeat to the Sadduceean party.

Later the temple tax, a responsibility which every true Jew had assumed to keep up their temple, was siezed by their Roman Governor and used for secular purposes. Since the chief ruler of the temple was of the Sadduceean sect, this again thwarted their power.

This of course would lead to a lifting of the pressure which the Sadduceean power had put upon Christianity. The few followers of the Messiah were now able to branch out, being free from this persecution, and see their number greatly multiply.

About this time the apostles instituted into the early organization of the church a new office called "deacon". Those filling this position assumed the task of serving tables in the daily ministration. Among the first seven men chosen to this responsibility was one named Stephen. He was noted for his faith, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Stephen's ministry was not confined, however, to the mere task of serving tables, for he did great wonders and miracles among the people, and he appears in various synagogues "disputing" with the Jews. It is highly possible that Paul was one

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1. Acts 6:5

with whom Stephen spent some time in dispute about Judaism, its temple, and law.

On one of the occasions of his evangelization with the Jews in the synagogue, Stephen was accused of attacking Moses, the giver of the Law, and God, the head of theocracy. The elders and scribes and people were stirred up against him, and he was brought before the Sanhedrin. Here Stephen is charged with speaking against the temple, and against the Law. This challenged the best that was in him, and he answered their charges with a discourse which meant much to the early church. Stephen was not willing that Christianity should be confined to the narrow channel of Judaism; and thus he declares that it is a spiritual religion which is not bound to ritual.

"Stephen was the appointed instrument for opening the enlarged view that Christianity, as purely spiritual, was independent of the Ceremonial Law, and that the time would come when the temple of Jerusalem would, with its former sacrifices, cease to be the great centre of worship."<sup>1</sup>

At this place there is evidence that a new era of spirituality is entering the progress of Christianity, and it begins to turn from the old bondage of Judaism.

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1. Thomas Lewin. Life and Epistles of St. Paul. p. 32.

Although Stephen seemed destined to a high career of evangelism, this discourse before the high council brought him to quite a different end. It resulted in his death, an incident which was somewhat similar to the trial and death of Jesus, four years previous, in the same place.

The final charge in Stephen's defense caused the mob to rise up in furious indignation against him. They "chase him out of the city, and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."<sup>1</sup>

The killing of Stephen was illegal according to Roman law, for the imperial government reserved the final decision in capital punishment for themselves. But at this present period of time the Roman Procurator was out of Judea on a peculiar occasion; Tiberius the Emperor had died, and the new successor to the throne would not be likely to take definite action at such an early date in his reign. Thus the enemies of Stephen are somewhat free to prosecute their own accusations.

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1. Acts 7:58



This early martyrdom was only the beginning of a raging persecution. The youthful Saul, who had consented to the death of Stephen, had no doubt been watching the rise of the Nazarenes with an indignant feeling for a long while.

"It might reasonably have been anticipated, that by the crucifixion of Jesus, the religion He published would also come to end; but when it appeared that the Nazarenes still maintained themselves as a sect, and even, as it was said, aimed at superseding the Law of Moses, Saul, 'being more exceedingly jealous of the traditions of his fathers,' and 'thinking with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth,' entered heart and hand upon, as he thought, the righteous design of eradicating the impious heresy."<sup>1</sup>

The rulers were desirous of exterminating the church, and they found a willing and ardent leader in Saul. Entering headlong into this mad career, he began to prosecute the work. As to the extent of the persecution which Paul instigated, we must notice the terms and phrases which he himself employs, to interpret the far-reaching disaster which he wrought.

To the people in front of the tower of Antonia, Paul recalls his former actions to the church--"I

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1. Thomas Lewin. Life and Ep. of St. Paul. pp. 34-35.

persecuted this way unto death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women."<sup>1</sup> This reveals somewhat the devastation which he wrought in homes and communities, and how he broke up and scattered Christian groups. He set out to leave none unreached. Even death was not too severe a penalty for him to enact. The word "havoc"<sup>2</sup> would, in a great sense, help us to see the destruction and ruin and the up-rooting which was brought about by his own hands.

In his Galatian letter Paul asserts that "beyond measure" he "persecuted the church of God."<sup>3</sup> Being almost impossible to estimate the extent of his persecution of the church, he certainly must weep, at least inwardly, when he recalls it before his brethren. We can readily see how this would wring out of the heart of Paul the deep confession which he made to the Corinthians: "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."<sup>4</sup> All of these expressions make us realize that we can hardly over-emphasize the havoc which Paul's persecution wrought in his endeavor

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1. Acts 22:4
  2. Acts 8:3
  3. Galatians 1:13
  4. I Corinthians 15:6

to stamp out Christianity and its followers.

"Saul, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."<sup>1</sup>

Saul had caused many of the disciples to flee to outlying areas because of his persecution in Jerusalem, but this did not dampen his fervor to reach the end of his objective. His was a determination to put to death or imprison the last disciple of Jesus. Thus upon hearing that some had escaped to Damascus and were hiding there, Saul set out with his warrant from the high priest. And, since the Jews all over the Empire were subject in matters of religion to the synagogue, and that in turn owed allegiance to the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, the Damascus Jews would be under the jurisdiction of this supreme council and Saul could go with authority.

"Armed with his credentials, Saul started from Jerusalem for his journey of nearly one hundred and fifty miles...however performed, the journey could not occupy less than a week, and even the fiery zeal of the persecutor would scarcely enable him to get rid of the habitual leisureliness of Eastern traveling. And thus, as they made their way along the

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1. Acts 9:1,2.

difficult and narrow roads, Saul would be doomed to a week of necessary reflection."<sup>1</sup>

This man had certainly seen much of the Christian spirit during his rage of persecution. He had witnessed the faith and spirit of the disciples when they were put under trial, and when he had hurled them into prison. He probably had witnessed Christian baptism and had seen the difference in meaning from what he knew as "ceremonial washings." He probably saw more than any other unbaptized man. He could not have been unaware of the "love feast" which signified the brotherhood of Christians, and which certainly challenged his mind. Amid all of this he could not help but think of the martyr, Stephen, whose blood he helped to spill.

Along with these past scenes which must have reflected themselves in Paul's thinking, there seemed to be within him a growing unrest because of the bondage of the Law. Judaism had not supplied the peace for which he had sought. His discussion of the law<sup>2</sup> reveals how the law had awakened his conscience, but it left him in bondage to sin. This seemed to drive him to a more strict loyalty to the law, and to a greater hostility to Christianity.

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1. Canon Farrar. Life of St. Paul. p. 117.

2. Romans 7:9-25.

"A man is never so violent in the assertion of his faith as when he feels it slipping from his grasp; and that was the reason of Saul's exceeding madness against the church."<sup>1</sup>

This man, while on his way to extend his career of persecution into a new area, was converted.

Some have referred to Paul's conversion as a cerebral commotion which changed this impetuous natured individual from one extreme of fanaticism to another,<sup>2</sup> yet we must consider Paul's personal statements of testimony to this experience; and, from these we are convinced that it was genuine, complete, transforming, and regenerating. As for Paul, he would say that he became a "new creature";<sup>3</sup> things which he had once longed for and desired were now lost to him, and more real things, which once he had hated, now became part of the new objective which possessed this new man. Such an experience would be paramount in the life of an individual and especially of this "Apostle to the Gentiles."

There are three accounts of Saul's conversion given in the book of Acts; one by the author,<sup>4</sup> and two by Paul himself.<sup>5</sup> They all bear record to the fact that this experience of Paul involved a supernatural

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1. David Smith. The Life and Letters of St. Paul. p. 47.
  2. Renan. The Apostles, English Translation. p. 97.
  3. I Cor. 5:17.
  4. Acts 9:3-18.
  5. Acts 22:6-16; 26:12-18.

revelation of Jesus. Both of Paul's records of personal testimony claim that it happened about midday or noon. About this time a bright light shined from heaven, and Paul and his fellow travelers were knocked to the ground. The glory of the light blinded Paul, and in the midst of his mental confusion and this sudden revelation a voice spoke. Then when Paul asked for an identification, the answer came "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." This voice was heard by the men that were with Paul, but they saw no one. Hereafter there seemed to be no doubt in Paul's mind as to his revelation of Jesus. Paul went further in surrendering to him, and said, "What will you have me do?" He was commanded to go on his way to Damascus, and since he was yet blind his companions led him on the way. In Damascus he met Ananias who laid his hands on Paul that he might receive his sight and that Paul might receive the Holy Spirit. Ananias declared to Paul that the reason for the vision was very definite; God had a purpose for his life. This persecutor had been chosen to bear the name of the resurrected Jesus before Gentiles and Kings and Jews, and to all men, and he was to be a witness of the things

he had heard and seen. Then Saul arose and was baptized.

This turning-about experience brought a new concept to Paul. First of all, he realized that Jesus was alive. Here Christ appears to him in person, and it is the source of his apostleship. He no longer doubted the resurrection of Jesus. Much of his later teaching was centered around that crowning fact.

The next phase of this revelation and call was that Paul was being sent not to one group of people, but to all nations.<sup>1</sup> God, revealing his son in Paul,<sup>2</sup> gave him an apostleship which carried him as a witness to all people.

The third element in this calling was that his witness was a very definite message, and sent especially to the Gentiles.

"For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and in those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee."<sup>3</sup>

Thus this enemy of Christ is transformed into a

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1. Romans 1:5.
2. Gal. 1:16.
3. Acts 26:16-17.

friend and follower of Christ, and Saul is adopted into the family of God and given a special task in the kingdom which he once fought against. The Pharisees of course would dread the loss of their zealous leader, and from now on he is subject to their persecution, but Paul was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. From here on, Paul's knowledge of the gospel and the content of his message, is based on this divine revelation of Jesus.

"Thus did Saul the persecutor become Saul the soldier of the Cross. He had been called to the Apostleship by Christ himself, at the time of the heavenly vision; and the investiture...was now completed by Ananias, by baptism and the laying-on of hands, and the communication of the Holy Spirit. Henceforth the indomitable zeal, which had been heretofore displayed...to the destruction of the faith, was to be exerted for its propagation. The scales had fallen from his intellectual sight, and his life, from this time till the day when he laid his head upon the block, was to be one unbroken series of toil and suffering, of contempt of the world and defiance of danger, of struggles, through good report and evil report, to the crown of everlasting glory."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Lewin. Life and Epistles of St. Paul. p. 54.



## SECTION TWO

### PAUL'S METHODS OF EVANGELISM

#### CHAPTER I

#### STEPS LEADING TO HIS EVANGELISM

During the time of the persecution which arose about Stephen, the disciples of Jesus were scattered about in the regions of Judea and Samaria. Persecution and imprisonment were rampant; yet the disciples went right on doing the very thing which brought on the persecution. Although the course which they pursued meant danger and difficulty and death, they ceased not to preach the word wherever they went. It was such a course which their Lord had followed, and it led to his death; but in spite of the fears and forebodings which confronted these men, they were willing to fight on in the great ministry of the word.

Some of these disciples journeyed as far as Phoenicia--probably visiting in Tyre and Sydon as they went and preaching in their synagogue; later they crossed

over to the island called Cyprus, and after preaching to the Jews there they returned to the mainland and came to Antioch. This metropolis was the Greek capital of Syria, and here a great number of people became believers and turned to the Lord. This was only the beginning of what was to be a great diffusion of faith from Antioch.

We do not know just when, but the tidings of this work were noised abroad and the Church in Jerusalem heard of it. Evidently this mother Church felt responsible to all newly organized groups, and so they dispatched a representative to Antioch to investigate the situation. Barnabas was their selection, and this was a wise choice for he was full of faith and the Holy Spirit. He would also be prepared to wisely judge the case, for he was a native of Cyprus and some were Cypriots who helped to start this work.

Barnabas, upon his arrival in Antioch, recognized the genuineness of the spirit which was working among these new believers, and he rejoiced over it. He proceeded to exhort them to a steadfast faith. Then, being desirous of doing the most effective work of evangelism,

Barnabas sought for Saul to come and be a helper in this new field. Saul had been back in his native vicinity of Tarsus, and probably doing some evangelizing in the province of Syria--Cilicia. However, whatever his task at that time, he went with Barnabas to take part in the winning of fresh converts in this new territory.

In order to have an unbroken series of events in Saul's early experiences, we pause here to recall some of the things which have transpired between his conversion and this trip to Antioch. First, the personal records of Saul show that he spent three years in Damascus, including the period of perhaps several months during which he retired into Arabia. Following his conversion he went at once and preached Christ in the synagogue, and this he did for several days. But this is immediately followed by the silence of that period of time in Arabia when Saul surely learned the fullness of the divine revelation of Christ which had come to him on the road to Damascus. He returned to Damascus from this retirement, and we discover him in the synagogue again, preaching and propagating the same message which he had started some months before. Next, we learn of the

plot of the Jews who were enemies of Saul and desired to kill him, but Saul escaped to Jerusalem. The apostles were doubtful about receiving him, but when introduced by Barnabas, they permitted him to have a part in their work. His disputing here with the Grecians led Saul into another dangerous position. In order to escape his death, the brothers of the Church sent him down to Tarsus. After this he also entered into Syria and Cilicia, and learning of his great change, the Churches glorified God because of his wonderful conversion.

Returning to the events in Antioch, we find that Barnabas and Saul spent the first year of their combined efforts in teaching the people of the Church. This was a further step toward confirming these Christians in their faith. About this time there were prophets who came down to Antioch from Jerusalem, and one of them, Agabus, prophesied of a famine which would soon spread throughout the land. The members of this Christian group in Antioch immediately prepared gifts for their needy brothers in Jerusalem and Barnabas and Saul were chosen to make the journey and convey the gifts.

During this stay in Jerusalem, Saul had a conference

with the apostles about his gospel for the Gentiles. Although a few legalists objected, Saul was given the right hand of fellowship by Peter, James, and John. It was about this same time in Jerusalem that Saul had his vision while in the temple. It is evident (and we mention this because the time of this vision is controversial) that Saul did not receive this vision during his first trip to Jerusalem after his conversion. For after his first brief stay, he was sent to Tarsus. But this vision is a direct command to go with his message to the Gentiles. After the second visit, the visit on which we propose he received this direct commission, Saul returned with Barnabas to Antioch, and after ordination by the prophets and teachers there, they departed on their first mission of evangelism. Evidently Jerusalem was not the place of his appointed labors, and hereafter Saul became the "Apostle to the Gentiles" --sent under the seal of a divine commission and apostleship.

## CHAPTER II

### FACTORS AFFECTING HIS EVANGELISM

The progressive work of the Church at Antioch was carried on by two groups of leaders--prophets, and teachers. They fulfilled the general labors of ministering and teaching, and with these they had the special tasks of fasting and selecting missionaries. This newly found Christian group in Antioch became the very cradle of Gentile evangelism, and the capital of Gentile Christianity. So, before launching on his first evangelistic tour, Saul was consecrated and commissioned by the elders of this Church who were definitely directed by the Holy Spirit. From here, in companionship with Barnabas, Saul embarked upon his mission of winning the Gentile world to the faith of Christ, his Lord. Although we have no definite record of it, we may imply from Saul's return trips and reports to the Antiochene Church, that this Christian group provided at least part of his

support for his labors.

There were several contributing factors which added to the efficiency and far-reaching results of Saul's evangelistic enterprise. For instance, he would be laboring in a universal Empire, and wherever he would go he would have the protection and privileges of Roman citizenship. This granted him a wide field of labor, and yet he would be able to keep within the boundaries of the dominion. There would also be a system of communication and transportation provided throughout the Empire, which would be available for his use. A universal language would be spoken--although bi-lingual, the Greek was understood everywhere, and Saul was well acquainted with this. There was also a general expectation of the Messiah, and from the reports of thousands who became proselytes, the pagans were feeling the lack of their religions. Thus, such a feeling abroad in the world would make way for this new faith to have entrance. Along with these, Saul was privileged to have the co-operation of a Spirit-filled Church in his labors.

While mentioning the factors which benefited Saul's labors, we cannot overlook those elements which were

great hindrances to his efforts. Among these we find that Pharisaic Judaism was the leading counter-active force. The Jew could not give up his law, but the salvation which Saul preached was by faith in Jesus Christ. Saul proclaimed a message that, if accepted, did away with the Law. The Jew could not break away from Abraham, the father of their race, and Moses, their law-giver. But Saul preached that Jesus was the fulfillment of the law, and that the only true way to be children of Abraham was by faith, and not by works of the law. This led to many up-risings of the Jews, and at times Saul was forced to flee from scenes of labor because of their conspiracies. This was the case when Saul was preaching in Berea.<sup>1</sup> The Jews, whom Saul had stirred up in Thessalonica, and who had been moved with envy against the success of this new message of the Apostle, came down to Berea and likewise stirred up the people. The elders of the Church immediately sent Saul away because of the great disturbance made by these men. Often times these false teachers and propagators of Judaism would enter into a field where Saul had labored

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1. Acts 17:13,14.



in times past, and preach contrary to Saul's gospel, saying that it was necessary to be circumcised in order to be saved. This is the element which underlies some of the Apostle's epistles, and we discover it has been the chief cause of some of his writings. Frequently the churches which were newly organized became endangered by these false teachers, and on some occasions the Apostle made a return trip to such communities to confirm the new disciples in their faith, and strengthen them against the advocates of Judaism.

Another of the hindering forces which Saul met with was sorcery. In fact this is one of the very first, and we find it for the first time in Paphos--the second place of ministry on their first evangelistic mission. Here they find a false prophet, a Jew, whose name is Barjesus, and he is a sorcerer. He is attached to the deputy of the country, and apparently had a place in his retinue. It is clear that this magician was here the representative of a system and a religion. When the deputy became interested in this new faith, the sorcerer endeavored to withstand the apostles and hinder them from further influencing his master.

"It is certain that the priests of some Eastern religions possessed some very considerable knowledge of the powers and processes of nature; and that they were able to do things that either were, or seemed to be, marvelous. Which of these alternatives was true is a point on which individual judgments will vary widely; but my own experience makes me believe that, so far as influence over human or animal nature and life was concerned, their powers were wonderful. It is natural that the magician's knowledge and powers should have made him a striking and interesting personality; and a person like the proconsul, keenly interested in nature and philosophy, would enjoy his society.

"The influence of this Eastern religion--one nature with many varieties--was widely spread; and it was inevitable that the new religion which was strongly opposed to its methods of dominating its votaries and crushing their personalities and individuality, should often be brought in collision with its teachers. Barjesus represented the strongest influence on the human will that existed in the Roman world, an influence which must destroy or be destroyed by Christianity, if the latter tried to conquer the Empire. Herein lies the interest of this strange scene; and we cannot wonder that to Luke, familiar with the terrible power of that religion, the Magian seemed the prominent figure round whom the action moved.

"At Philippi, and at Ephesus also, collisions took place between the two influences, of slavery and of freedom for the human mind; but neither was so impressive as this at Paphos...the Magian here was actuated chiefly by the fear of losing his prominent place in the governor's train...He saw in the new teachers mere rivals trying to supplant

him; and human nature could not accept defeat without a struggle."<sup>1</sup>

A third restricting influence in this evangelist's career, and certainly a distressing one, was his physical infirmity. Of course no one can be sure as to just what this infirmity was, although there has been no end of guesses and speculations ventured about it. Jerome has been said to present four opinions that were prevalent in his day as to what this affliction was.<sup>2</sup> First, he submits the infirmity as being the rudimentary teaching which he had to finally address to the Galatians as babes unfit for strong meat. Second, the insignificance of his personal appearance. Third, a sickness which he had when he came among the Galatians, and tradition said it was a severe headache. Fourth, the insults and persecutions which the enemies of the Gospel inflicted upon him at the beginning of his ministry in Galatia.

Whatever the physical malady, it was not just a temporary affliction, but was indeed a very distressing sickness. It must have brought upon its victim a feel-

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1. W. M. Ramsay. St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen. pp 78 ff.
2. David Smith. The Life and Letters of St. Paul. Append. III.

ing of shame and lothesomeness, especially if he was made prostrate and helpless before the people among whom he should have been laboring.

Most arguments about Saul's physical handicap lead us to imply that it was a malarial fever. If this be true, we may get an idea of its effects upon an individual from Professor Ramsay.

"Everyone who is familiar with the effect of the fevers that infest especially the south coasts of Asia Minor, but are found everywhere in the country, knows that they come in recurring attacks, which prostrates the sufferer for the time, and then, after exhausting themselves, pass off, leaving him very weak; that a common remedy familiar to all is change to the higher lands; and that, whenever anyone who has once suffered has his strength taxed, physically or mentally, the old enemy prostrates him afresh, and makes him for a time incapable of any work. Apart from the weakness and ague, the most trying and painful accompaniment is severe headache."<sup>1</sup>

It is not necessary to enlarge further on these hindering factors of Saul's evangelism; it has been our desire to merely plainly state them. Therefore we proceed to follow the Apostle in the methods which he employed in preaching the Gospel of Christ and winning new converts to this faith.

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1. Ramsay. Hist. Comm. on Gal. pp. 422 ff.

### CHAPTER III

#### HIS MASS EVANGELISM

Venturing on such a strategic mission, and giving himself to such a large field of labor, Paul (whose name was change from Saul to Paul in Paphos) would of a necessity be required to work with a definitely methodical program of evangelism in order to accomplish his new objective--that of winning the Gentile world to Christ. To thus internationalize Christianity would demand of him ample preparation and equipment, and a system of labors which would take him to the vital centers of the Empire, from which he would be able to send forth the Gospel.

First of all, we find that Paul did not labor alone. There were many assistants who willingly gave themselves as co-workers in his strenuous enterprise. Of course we begin with Barnabas, and we follow him to many distant scenes of activity as he journeyed with

Paul as a companion in his ministry. He not only introduced Paul to the brethren in Jerusalem when he appeared there for the first time after his conversion, but he was appointed to be the leading traveler when these two brothers were chosen to convey the Antiochene gifts to the needy Church in Jerusalem. He was ordained with Paul by the Church in Antioch, and from here he proceeded throughout the first journey to share in the responsibility of this new task. However, at the close of the first evangelistic tour, the two apostles separated because of a disagreement. Here Paul and Silas became fellow-laborers in the field of evangelism, and they suffered alike as they journeyed together in preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Later, after Paul's vision of the man in Macedonia, and after arriving in Troas, a new associate came on the scene of Paul's evangelistic career. It was Luke, the man acquainted with medicine; and the "we-sections" of Acts reveal his detailed record of his journeys with the great Apostle.

"He was not a solitary evangelist, but rather the commanding officer of a large circle of missionaries; and the number of his co-laborers increased with the progress

of his work."<sup>1</sup>

Others who were considered as helpers in Paul's labors were Aquilla and Priscilla. These assistants helped in the work in Corinth, and later joined Paul in his journey to Ephesus, and there they seemed to spend considerable time in confirming the Church. In Ephesus Paul had two other recorded companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, and when the Jews caused an uprising in the city, these men were carried into the theatre with the crowd, being recognized as friends of the Apostle.

Many more might be named as those who benefited Paul in carrying out his program. Among them we list an added few in number: Timothy and Titus, sons in the common faith, Mark, Lydia, Justus, and Crispus. These, and others, were assistants of Paul as co-workers, as representatives, as friends in the gospel, and as possible scribes. Such a group of equipped leaders made possible in each community a more widespread evangelism and a more efficient organization of new Churches.

Following Paul in his journeys we discover that

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1. George T. Purves. Apostolic Age. p. 177.

he directs his interest to the cosmopolitan and commercial centers.

"It was through Paul's work that Christianity was established in the chief cities of the empire, and thus obtained the significance which it had when Luke wrote."<sup>1</sup>

From here, if he is successful, he can send his new converts to smaller communities, and thus branch out into a wider field of service. This would be true of Antioch, Tarsus, Ephesus, Troas, Athens, Thessalonica, Corinth, and other cities. Into these localities would pour traders, salesmen, buyers, and people with various business interests. Paul being a man of occupation himself would also give him contact with the members of the Guild system. It was in these larger points of geographical concern that Paul busied himself in making new converts to his faith. As he traveled, he went only to the most important parts, or the ones to which he was divinely directed, and when he was not supported by the mother Church in Antioch he proceeded to join himself to some tent-making establishment and thus provide his own support.

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1. George T. Purves. Apostolic Age. p. 178.



In his efforts to preach his new gospel to as many as possible, Paul employed every instrumentality that was available, and at the same time reasonable, for his purpose. We find him frequently entering into the synagogues and preaching to the leaders and the people. The agency of the synagogue seems to have given Paul an entrance to speak to more people than was granted by any other. At times, especially in Antioch, he was invited by the rulers of the synagogue to come and deliver his gospel to them in their services. Such evangelistic preaching was very successful. Many occasions record large numbers of believers as direct results of his message. This was the case in Iconium, when a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. When, in company with Silas and Timothy, Paul came to Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, his preaching was again accompanied with success.

"For three Sabbaths he preached in the synagogue (XVII 2) for there was a large colony of Jews in the city. He proved to them from the Scripture that Jesus is the Christ, and that his death and resurrection were necessary (XVII 3). The result was the formation of a Church composed of a few Jews and many devout Gentiles, with some women

of high social standing." (XVII 4)<sup>1</sup>

It was the custom which Paul had adopted to visit every possible synagogue, and there preach Jesus to the people.

When Paul entered Corinth he proceeded with his usual method of entering the synagogue. Here he "persuaded" the Jews and Greeks to believe. We have reasons for believing that his ministry of eighteen months was a strenuous period of labor; for Corinth was a wicked city. Its vast population was mostly made up of slaves, and the religion of Corinth ministered to the low morals of this pleasure-loving people. The city had an atmosphere of sensuality. When Paul came he saw it at its zenith, but in spite of all these conditions which seemed almost impossible to conquer, the preaching of the gospel was again blessed with success. When Silas and Timothy brought him encouraging reports of the work in Thessalonica, Paul was spurred to a more intense effort to win Corinth also. Although dispute arose, the apostle's company grew

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1. George T. Purves. Apostolic Age. p. 188.

rapidly. The ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, believed; but most of the converts were from the lower classes of the populace, and most of them were Gentiles. This is another of the examples of Paul's evangelistic preaching reaching many through the agency of the synagogue.

However, Paul did not limit himself to any one place of preaching. When there was no synagogue available, he proceeded to find another medium by which to reach new converts. For instance, when he came to Philippi, and not finding a synagogue, he sought out the 'place of prayer' by the river to which chiefly women resorted. Here was the beginning of a large body of disciples that were gathered into the number of Paul's new converts.

In court-rooms, in prisons, in market-places, Paul found time and opportunity to preach his gospel. He had set out to use every means to win people to Jesus Christ. Even a place on a hillside was good enough for Paul to make a pulpit, if he had a crowd to which he could deliver his message.

Paul's presentation of his message was adapted to the people to whom he was preaching. It was

sometimes necessary to endeavor to remove false ideas of former religions, and then plant the seeds of the new faith. He thus reconstructed their religious belief on the facts of which he was a witness, namely, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In presenting Jesus as the Messiah and Christianity as superior to any other religion, Paul reached new believers in all points of the empire. After Churches had been organized, the Apostle revisited them to confirm them in the faith and to firmly fix them in a knowledge of Jesus and His gospel. Such a program of mass evangelism was truly a great factor in fulfilling the Apostle's calling--his calling to win the Gentile world to Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER IV

### HIS PERSONAL EVANGELISM

When Paul was yet a Pharisee, and was spreading his fierce hostility everywhere against Christianity, he labored earnestly, thinking that he was rendering service to God. He persecuted the Church, and went everywhere to seek out individuals who claimed to be followers of Jesus and imprisoned them. But now that he had surrendered his life to the Christian way of living, he gave greater devotion in service, and worked with a more fervent spirit, seeking to win every possible individual to the Christ whom he once had opposed. His energies were directed in a new channel--that of making the Gospel of Jesus Christ effective in the life of every person that it was possible for him to contact. Paul had truly learned to become all things to all men, that by all means he might be able to save some. His parish had no boundaries, nor did he confine himself

to any one means of winning converts to Christ. But in the writing of this concluding chapter we wish to direct our attention to the fact that the Apostle often employed the opportunities of personal contacts to win new adherents to the cause of Christianity. This great evangelist had a great message to give, and he was constantly aware of his divine commission to convey that message to others. Therefore he availed himself of all the methods which presented themselves to him, that he might make new disciples for his Master.

A fine example of Paul's dealing with individuals is found in his evangelism in Ephesus. There he first entered into the synagogue and argued with the Jews for the space of three months, hoping that they would accept his gospel. However, these Jews took a stand of decided opposition, so the Apostle hired a lecture-room in which he could preach his message to those who desired to attend. But at the same time that he was thus publicly persuading people with his message, he also went from "house to house" and privately convinced people to become followers of the Lord.

"The seed thus industriously sown soon sprang up, and ripened into an abundant harvest.

The disciples became so numerous, that presbyters, or bishops, as they were then called, were ordained by Paul, and Churches were regularly established, not only in Ephesus, but throughout Asia."<sup>1</sup>

In this manner Paul exerted a strenuous effort to win persons by private persuasion.

Of course our study of Paul's personal evangelism must be somewhat confined to definite illustrations. We notice the first to be found in the beginning of the first evangelistic tour which was made by the Apostle, in which his early labors were rewarded by the conversion of a Roman Proconsul. This man was Sergius Paulus, and having become interested in the preaching of these two missionaries who had come to his city, he sent for them to come in order that he might hear them for himself. The Proconsul had a magician or astrologer among his associates, and he had been presenting Paulus with a form of religion which was very different from that which the apostles offered him. Therefore, he realized that if his master should be persuaded to accept Christianity, he himself would be released from his lucrative position. Because of this he interrupted Paul's testimony to the

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1. Thomas Lewin. Life and Epistles of St. Paul. p. 333.

Proconsul and tried to prevent a further interview. About the same time the Spirit moved upon Paul to perform the miracle of cursing the sorcerer with a season of blindness, and this led to the conclusion of their conversation. The writer of the book of Acts closes this incident by saying that the Proconsul, when he saw what was done, "believed".<sup>1</sup> The message of Paul seemed to have brought a conviction to Paulus that persuaded him to accept the Christian message. This was certainly a successful contact for personal evangelism.

We cannot say as to the conversion of the sorcerer, but the incident must have left a lasting impression on his pagan mind. One writer speaks of the blindness with which Paul smote Barjesus, the sorcerer, saying,

"Paul's hope was that, resembling himself in his sin and his punishment, Barjesus would resemble him also in his repentance. 'By the sign whereby he had himself been won', says Chrysostom, 'he desired to win him too. And, moreover, "for a season" is not the word of one who would punish, but of one who would convert; for had he meant punishment, he would have made him permanently blind.' The issue is unrecorded, but the miracle is in no wise unavailing. Whether it won the astrologer or no, it won the Proconsul."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Acts 13:12.

2. David Smith. The Life and Letters of Saint Paul. p.86.



Searching further into this journey of the Apostle's evangelism we find another of Paul's "sons in the faith" in Lystra, named Timothy. This young man, with a noble character, later became a meet companion of Paul in much of his ministry. Having become a convert under Paul, and having been instructed well in religion in his own home, Timothy was well equipped to be an assistant with this great evangelist in his work.

"Though we, for the first time, hear of his name at Lystra during the Apostle's second circuit, he had evidently been a convert at the date of Paul's first visit to Antioch in Pisidia, and, in the place of Mark, who had withdrawn his services at Perga, had followed Paul successively to Iconium and Lystra, as we are assured by the Apostle himself."<sup>1</sup>

Titus also receives the same form of greeting in the Epistle addressed to him -

"To Titus, mine own son after the common faith."<sup>2</sup>

From this statement made by the Apostle, we may infer that Titus was also converted by Paul. Later, Titus also became a fellow-laborer and partner with him.

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1. Thomas Lewin. Life and Epistles of St. Paul. p. 167.
  2. Titus. 1:4.

We turn next to the labors of Paul in the city of Philippi. Since there was no synagogue in that place, he sought out the place of prayer which was located on a river bank. There, in a conversation with the women who had gathered, Paul won a convert. Her name was Lydia, and she was a lady who was prosperously engaged at Philippi in the sale of purple fabrics. The message of the Gospel appealed to her need and at length she professed her faith and was baptized. This was Paul's first convert in his European field of evangelism. Lydia immediately pressed her hospitality upon these strangers, and unlike their custom in other places, they went to her house for shelter.

During his continued labors in Philippi, in companionship with Silas, Paul was imprisoned by the people of that city because of his message and the miracles which he performed. It was while he was in prison that an earthquake arose and shook the prison walls until the gates were opened. The man in charge of the prisoners immediately became fearful of their escape, and rather than suffer such disgrace he resolved to end his own life. At the moment he was about to carry out

his plan Paul spoke to him, and he halted in his procedure. He perhaps had a moment to reflect on some past happenings. He had possibly heard of these evangelists before, and of the message which they were preaching in the city, and he could not have forgotten so soon the composure and serenity which the apostles manifested when they were beaten and placed in the prison. He remembered, too, how they had been singing and praying at the midnight hour. These reflections led him at once to fall at the feet of these men, and with an earnest request, seek to know how to obtain his own salvation. In answer to his inquiry they said,

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,  
and thou shalt be saved."<sup>1</sup>

They continued to speak the word of the Lord to him, and also his house, and after he had washed the wounds of Paul and Silas, he was baptized. This again is a conversion resulting from the personal knowledge of, and personal acquaintance with, the Apostle.

The next examples we turn to are found in the evangelization of Corinth. Here there were many con-

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1. Acts 16:31.

verted through the Gospel, both of Jews and Greeks. The first whom he won over was Stephanas and his family, as Paul tells us in his first Epistle to the Corinthians:

"Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints."<sup>1</sup>

It would appear very likely that the Apostle, through personal contact in the home, had won this family to become Christians. We mention also at this time Crispus and Gaius, who were converts in this same place. Crispus was a noted man, and a ruler of the synagogue. This man believed Paul's message, and was among the converts who left the synagogue to go with Paul when he turned to the Gentiles. Gaius was a man of substance, and a profitable man to win to the Church; he gave provisions and lodging to Paul and his companions on a later trip to Jerusalem. It is interesting to note that these men, Stephanas and his house, Crispus, and Gaius, were the only Corinthian converts whom Paul baptized with his own hands; and the reason was that Timothy, on whom the

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1. I Cor. 16:15.

capacity of attending to the administration of the sacrament properly devolved, had gone on his errand to Thessalonica at the time of their conversion.

We briefly mention Epaphras, a leader in the Church at Colosse. In fact he appears to be the one who had introduced Christianity into that city. But we trace his conversion to his contact with Paul. He was one of the numerous provincials who had visited Ephesus during the Apostle's ministry there and he had been won to the faith. From here he carried home the glad tidings to his people. This is one of the best illustrations of what Paul had hoped to accomplish by winning converts in the larger centers who would go into other sections and raise up groups of disciples.

Paul also won other converts as a result of his method of personal evangelism. Among them we mention a few from Thessalonica who later became constant companions and fellow-laborers of the Apostle. We refer to Secundus, and perhaps Jason, who was his host while there. Also Sosthenes, a ruler in the synagogue in Corinth, later became a convert, and was joined with Paul in the opening salutation of the First Epistle to

the Corinthians. Others of the same city were Fortunatus, Achaicus, Chloe, Tertius, and Quartus.

Through every channel that was opened to Paul, he exerted his influence and the power of his gospel in order to win men and women to the Christian faith. Miracles were not excluded, for we find that handkerchiefs were taken from the body of Paul and placed on the bodies of sick persons, and they were healed. But certainly no more efficient work was done, that had such lasting results, as that in his field of personal evangelism. The preaching of the gospel to the multitudes in various places, and his private interviews and personal visits and acquaintances, cover the entire program of this great apostolic evangelist.

Paul's evangelism, both mass and personal, was widespread, dynamic, effective, inclusive, and yielded many evidences of great success. His labors were indeed fruitful, and his message was not his own, but truly from Him that sent him. We therefore conclude this writing with a prayer, that in our present day, there may be raised up evangelists who will be as consecrated, as convincing, and as effective in changing the course of the world, as this great "Apostle to the Gentiles".

## APPENDIX

### PAUL AS A WITNESS

Two facts that are indelibly engraved upon the history of the first century are, first, that Saul of Tarsus persecuted the early Church, and second, that he afterward became a most zealous and successful herald of the gospel. Paul's conversion to faith in the risen Messiah also brought a conviction in his soul that he was to preach the gospel. The source of the message which he preached is in God's revelation of Christ. Thus he became a witness to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Lord. Often times Paul declared that the cross of Christ was the one and the only gospel which he preached.

"Paul drew all his doctrines, and all his instructions, and all his reproofs, out of the cross of Christ. He drew his profound and poignant doctrines of the sinfulness of sin, and the consequent misery of man, out of the cross of Christ...He drew his incomparably magnificent doctrines of the grace of God and the love of Christ out of the cross of Christ: those doctrines of his in the preaching of which he bursts out into such

rapturous doxologies. The whole of the life of faith also, in all its manifoldness, and in all its universalness, and his own full assurance of everlasting life,--all that, and much more than all that, Paul, by his splendid genius, and it all so splendidly sanctified and inspired, drew out of the cross of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Paul had no distinctive dogma to put before his people, and nothing which was likely to be thought a thing incredible, but only the simple facts of Jesus to which he witnessed. But he was amply qualified by these for the mission that he was called to carry out. This is well expounded in an article by Edward F. Williams, entitled, "Is Paul a Competent Witness?" He says,

"One of the most important questions we can ask relates to the confidence we are justified in placing in the testimony which Paul gives concerning the Person and the Redemptive Work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Few deny that Paul himself believes in the deity of Jesus, that he preached this belief of his to others, or that he affirms as a fact not to be set aside that the death of Christ is the ground upon which God forgives sin. Is this testimony true?...

"We require of a witness that he be personally acquainted with the facts in regard to which he testifies, that he know them at first hand, that his opportunities for knowing them be abundant and complete, that

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1. Alexander Whyte. The Apostle Paul. pp. 55, 56.



he actually make use of these opportunities, and that his character for veracity be well established. The testimony of a man with these qualifications is immensely increased in value, or convincing power, when it comes from a person whose previous attitude toward that about which he testifies has been an attitude of uncompromising hostility; so that, in giving his testimony, not only does he abandon the religious belief he has received from his forefathers, but sacrifices all his cherished hopes of life, promises no other reward than that of a good conscience.

"That all these conditions involved in the formation of a trustworthy witness are met in the case of Paul, no candid student of his life can successfully deny...For the sake of argument one might admit that the account of the conversion of Paul is somewhat exaggerated, unhistorical; but one cannot escape the conviction that he went through some sort of an experience somewhere, on one of his persecuting tours in his early manhood, which changed entirely his mental attitude toward the teachings of Jesus, as well as his personal relations toward Jesus and his followers. That Paul bears favorable testimony to Jesus and his followers after this experience no one denies.

"Nor does anyone, so far as I am aware, deny his competency to testify concerning what he regards as his own conversion, or that he is justified in speaking of that experience as an incontrovertible fact in his life. This testimony is valuable in proving that such a man as Jesus once lived in Jerusalem, taught doctrines which seemed to contradict those deemed essential in Judaism, died on the cross and was buried. In other words, Paul's testimony concerning himself

strengthens our confidence in him as a witness for historical events in the life of Jesus...As a defender of his faith as a Jew, Paul must have persuaded himself that it was true, (that is, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and pentecost) and that he had good grounds on which to justify his career as a persecutor.

"Such a person is certainly competent to speak about another person in whose opinions and deeds he himself has a peculiar interest... If we keep in mind the endowments of Paul, his age..., the thoroughness of his Jewish training, his associates, his prospects, the social position which as a Christian he forfeited, we can see at once that he would not change his belief as 'a Pharisee of the Pharisees', or his attitude with reference to Jesus, save for reasons which to him were irresistibly convincing. In accepting Jesus as Messiah, apparently he had everything to lose. Were the claims of Jesus grounded in fact, then neither he nor any other reasonable man could hesitate to admit them. That Paul did admit them, and defend them, is evidence that he held them to be both reasonable and true. That he risked his life and endured constant hardships for a generation without wavering, in their proclamation and defence, is proof of his opinion of the man whom his brethren as to the flesh put to death.

"...Where it (his testimony) was questioned, as for a time in Corinth, he was at pains to show upon what grounds he was worthy of confidence as an apostle, and equal in dignity to the very chiefest of the apostles. He preached and wrote out of his personal experience. He verified the truths of the

gospel before presenting them to others. What he has to give, he gives from knowledge which has come to him through no inter-mediary, but from Christ himself. This supernatural revelation is so clear and convincing that he can no more set it aside than he can set aside the consciousness of his existence. He knows what the gospel is. He understands its value for men. The value that he has himself tested. What better testimony could we desire? It is independent of that found in the Synoptics, but it is in harmony with it. It is given from a point of view which only a man like Paul could occupy. It is colored through with his personality. It was a testimony which cost the man who uttered it the loss of everything that men count dear in this world, and brought him to a martyr's death."<sup>1</sup>

In Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians he gives us the whole theme of his message. For he says,

"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."<sup>2</sup>

These words from the apostle himself contain the facts of which he was a witness, and the facts which

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1. Bibliotheca Sacra. V. 56; p. 657 ff.
2. I Cor. 15:3-8.

he preached. Although we do not have all of Paul's sermons recorded, we are aware of the foundation-stones of his message, and we are given enough of his teaching to understand the essentials by which to obtain salvation. It is with this message that Paul made his program of evangelism effective throughout the Gentile world.

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